Background

All Saints’ Episcopal Church is a large, progressive, diverse community of Christian faith located in the heart of midtown Atlanta. Its pews and halls are filled with urban neighbors, suburban families, and long-time members who have watched the city, quite literally, grow up around the parish. For those who call All Saints’ home, they also describe their church as “loving,” “welcoming,” “inclusive,” and “inspiring.”

All Saints’ began at the turn of the century in 1901, and members today worship in the same church building parishioners have been using since 1906. In the 118 years since its beginnings, the grounds have expanded significantly, with All Saints’ now owning an entire city block on West Peachtree Street. This is a church committed to practicing what they preach, with multiple community outreach ministries being a primary focal point of their purpose. With 11 weekly worship opportunities, All Saints’ is committed to keeping first things first by setting aside time throughout each week for prayer, reflection, praise, and celebration.

There are over 2,800 people on the rolls of All Saints’, with an average weekly worship attendance of around 650. The church is led by the Reverend Dr. Simon Mainwaring, who began serving as Rector in 2017. He heads up a staff that includes three full-time associate rectors, four staff devoted to outreach ministries, two full-time staff devoted to communications, two full-time staff devoted to music ministry, a part-time youth and children’s music director, a part-time children’s minister, a part-time youth minister, a full-time director of stewardship and giving, and additional support staff who oversee finances, membership, facilities, security, administration, and more.

The youth ministry begins in 6th grade at All Saints’ and oversees formation for students through their 12th grade year of high school. Currently, there are 178 youth on the rolls with 74 considered to be “active.” During a typical week, 30 6th-12th graders participate in Sunday school (10:20-11:10 AM), 40 in the weekly worship services, five in the Wednesday evening Bible study (7:00 - 8:00 PM), and there are 42 students who are regularly part of the youth choirs and hand bells (4:00 - 6:00 PM, Sunday afternoons). In
addition to the weekly happenings, 7th-12th graders are invited to a monthly gathering called “SNL” - Sunday Night Live - while 6th-8th graders have their own once-a-month get-together called “Attic Invasion.” Throughout the semesters, the youth minister plans pop-up breakfasts in various neighborhoods around the city to meet up with students before school, as well. Milestone events include Rite 13, Confirmation, Pilgrimage, and Senior Sunday. Special events include diocesan youth events (although the church would like to see more engaged at that level), Parish Family Weekend at Kanuga Conference Center, and Camp Mikell in the summer. Older students describe their youth group as “inclusive,” “interactive,” and “Gucci” while younger students who were interviewed said, “Sometimes it can be fun, and sometimes it can be boring.”

The youth ministry is led by Youth Minister Joel Smith, who has been a part of the staff since 2017, Associate Rector Zack Nyein, who joined the staff in the fall of 2018, and Director of Youth and Children’s Music Karol Kimmell, who has been serving in her role since 1998. The ministry is supported by eight volunteers, and others assist at special events or behind the scenes throughout the year.

The church is currently undergoing a season of strategic planning and visioning. A taskforce of laity has recently been formed to examine the current state of the children’s and youth ministries, help cast vision for the future, and determine the best next steps needed to get there. The vestry of All Saints’ is in full support of this initiative. The hope is to not just be a church with a lot of young people, but a “young people’s church”, where youth are driving their parents to want to be a part of All Saints’ more than the parents driving their youth. As a part of this work, goals have been set to increase the number of neighborhood-based small groups for students, strengthen the diocesan connections and larger church opportunities youth can be a part of, and develop programming that encourages a thriving community where students can be themselves and grow in relationship with God.

The church had a 2018 budget of $3,900,000, of which approximately $112,150 is dedicated to the youth ministry. This includes the program expenses as well as the salary and benefits for the staff. Additionally, in the past few years, the youth facilities have been completely renovated and updated, providing an incredible space in which students can gather, learn, fellowship, and call their own.

Ministry Architects was invited to do an initial assessment of the youth ministry and to make recommendations about how it might move strategically forward. Ministry Architects met with 77 individuals in 14 focus groups or one-on-one meetings, and 20 online surveys were completed for a total of 97 participants. What follows are the findings gleaned from those conversations along with recommendations and a proposed timeline for the future.
Youth Ministry in Context

One lens Ministry Architects likes to use for understanding youth ministry is the idea of the “three rents.” Youth ministries that “pay these rents” tend to have much greater freedom to be creative, take risks, and experiment with innovative ideas. The youth ministries that fail to pay these rents often find themselves mired in distrust, second-guessing, and discouragement.

It has been Ministry Architects’ experience that though these three rents, in and of themselves, do not ensure an effective or faithful ministry, they are often the most immediate evaluation tools used by youth, parents, staff, and the congregation at large.

Rent #1: Numbers-A significant percentage of youth need to be participating visibly in some aspect of the church’s youth ministry. It is important for this target number to be clearly agreed on by the church leaders and the staff. Ironically, when target numbers are not established, the youth ministry is typically more likely to be judged by numbers than if the target numbers are clearly established.

The consensus is that this rent is being paid. With students serving regularly as acolytes, engaging with the youth choir, and attending scheduled activities like weekly Sunday school and monthly gatherings, there are a number of youth at All Saints’ who are visibly participating consistently.

Rent #2: Programs-In order to “earn the right” to experiment with changes, the youth leadership needs to provide the church with a few visible, effective youth programs that give both youth and parents “something to talk about.”

This rent appears to be partially paid. While there is positive buzz around programs like the choir and the newly established consistency of weekly meeting times, hope exists but trust in the program is still being built.

Rent #3: Enthusiasm-The joyful enthusiasm and positive attitude of the youth staff, volunteers, and the youth themselves are essential to building trust with the leadership of the church and with the parents.

There is inconsistent excitement across the four stakeholder groups (students, parents, volunteers, and church members) suggesting that this rent is in the process of being paid. Enthusiasm seems to be increasing, but there are still a lot of questions around where the ministry is heading.

As the leadership of the youth ministry develops its long-range vision, it will need, at the same time, to be attentive to these “three rents.” In this sense, the youth ministry faces parallel challenges.
As the youth ministry leadership steps into this parallel process, five rules of thumb – “youth ministry norms” – will be helpful to keep in mind. These are not necessarily targets for success; they are simply what an average church typically experiences:

1) **10% of the Worshiping Congregation**: In a typical church, the size of the youth ministry tends to settle at a number that is around 10% of the worshiping congregation. A church with an average worship attendance of 650 could expect an average weekly attendance of around 65 youth per week. The current weekly attendance of 74 youth is over and above what a church of this size could normally expect to see. Celebrate!

2) **20% Ceiling**: Ministry Architects has also discovered that in many churches, the youth ministry has difficulty growing beyond a level that equals 20% of the weekly worshiping congregation. Very few youth ministries seem to be able to break beyond this 20% level. All Saints’ might keep in mind, then, that the expected ceiling for this youth ministry is around 130 youth. The road to that level of participation is dependent on increased staffing, volunteers, and budget.

3) **$1,500 per Youth**: With a budget of approximately $112,150 (including program budget, staff salaries, and benefits) dedicated to the youth ministry, All Saints’ has the capacity to effectively reach and maintain a weekly participation level of somewhere in the neighborhood of 75 youth in some aspect of the church’s life. With 74 currently participating every week, the ministry is right on target for its current reach. However, it is not likely the ministry will be able to do more to reach the 178 youth on its rolls without more of an investment. Keep in mind that this dollar amount can vary widely depending on the cost of living in the church’s community.

4) **1 Full-Time Staff Person for Every 50 Youth**: Considering all the positions giving time to the youth ministry, including the youth minister (20 hours), the director of children’s and youth music (20 hours), and an associate rector (7 hours), All Saints’ has the equivalent of 1.2 full time staff persons. According to this rule of thumb, All Saints’ has the capacity to sustain the engagement of about 59 youth on a weekly basis. The current staff configuration seems inadequate to sustain the needs of the ministry. The youth staff is set up to be unable to fulfill all the expectations placed on them. In order to see the kind of growth the church is excited to experience, more staffing may be needed.

Laying the Foundation: Building a foundation and infrastructure that will ensure the youth ministry’s future effectiveness, and at the same time,

Continuing to Do Ministry: Maintaining the current youth ministry in a way that builds the enthusiasm of youth, their families, the staff, and the church at large.
5) 1 Adult for Every 5 Youth: Ministry Architects likes to think in terms of "spans of care," recognizing that, realistically, most volunteers cannot effectively oversee the church’s Christian nurture of more than about five youth on an ongoing basis. With 8 weekly volunteers, All Saints’ is currently at a ratio of 1 adult leader to every 10 youth. Ideally, though, with this number of volunteers, the capacity would be for 40 youth weekly. In other words, the team is too small to attend to the relational needs of the 74 youth who currently attend. The volunteer pool will need to expand if the church wants to sustain its impact with youth.

Building a Sustainable Staff
When a ministry is based solely on the giftedness of a single staff person, instability is a predictable result. Ministry Architects has found that the most stable approach to staffing a ministry, particularly in the early stages of a rebuild, is to build a staff of three different kinds of people:

- **The Architect:** A person who designs the building plan and ensures that building is done in compliance with the agreed-upon plan.

- **The General Contractor:** A person who manages the flow and sequencing of work, manages the building process according to the agreed-upon blueprint, and ensures that the appropriate number of “laborers” is in place for each stage of the project.

- **The Laborers:** Those people charged with specific gifts and responsibilities for particular aspects of the work. In youth ministry, a laborer might have particular skills in relating to youth, in planning and managing events, or in teaching.

Each of these roles is important as All Saints’ pursues a more sustainable model of youth ministry. The associate rector is currently serving in the roles of general contractor and architect and the program is lacking laborers. But the church will need to consider staffing for growth in the future and ensuring that staff roles have evolved to fit the sustainable model.
Children’s Ministry Observations
While Ministry Architects was hired to do a youth ministry assessment, All Saints’ is in the process of strategic improvements for both children and youth. In order to collect some data about the children’s program, a listening session was held for parents of children and numerous parents filled out the online survey. In the brief amount of information collected, there are some key observations that All Saints’ will need to address as they move forward with strategic planning.

Children’s Ministry Norms
**15% of the Worshiping Congregation:** In a typical church, the size of the children’s ministry tends to settle at a number that is around 15% of the weekly worshiping congregation. With worship attendance at All Saints’ at 650, one would expect to see a children’s program size to be around 98. It was reported that current Sunday school attendance is up to 103 from 63 last year. Attendance is not being taken at Children’s Church and estimated attendance on Wednesday afternoon/evening is 100 children. So the total number of active children could easily be well above 103.

**One full-time staff person for every 70 children:** Considering all the positions giving time to the children’s ministry, including the director of children’s and youth music (20 hours), the associate rector (7 hours), and the director of children’s ministry (30 hours), All Saints’ has the equivalent of 1.4 full-time staff persons. According to this rule of thumb, All Saints’ has the capacity to sustain the engagement of about 100 children on a weekly basis. The current staff configuration seems inadequate to sustain the needs of the ministry today. With the significant growth in one year coupled with the strategic planning for the children’s ministry, the current staffing will most likely not be sufficient to sustain any future growth.

Given these two norms for children’s ministry at All Saints’, the need for the church to address the current staffing is urgent.

Children’s Formation
The director of children’s music ministry has put a lot of effort into creating a scope of sequence of scripture or Bible stories for the children. There is a four-year rotational plan that lays out the key stories of the Bible that All Saints’ wants its children to know. This is fabulous but only seems to address Sunday school. Given the other programmatic elements of the children’s ministry - children’s choirs, children’s church, Wednesday evening programs, and special events - there is not an overall plan that brings all the components together into a cohesive model. There needs to be a more coordinated effort for all of children’s programming that tie in all aspects of Christian formation for children and any future milestones the church hopes to add. This effort should be done in conjunction with the youth ministry so there is a Christian formation plan for children and youth that is seamless from birth to 18 years of age.

Children’s Space
The children’s ministry occupies the 2nd floor of the Pritchett Center while the nursery and preschool programs are held on the 1st floor. Both spaces are shared with the Bright Horizons Preschool that leases space from the church during the week. The children’s space is designed to support a rotation model of Sunday school in which children hear a Bible story in different ways. There is an art room, movie room, game room, library, quiet reflection space, music hall for children’s choir and hand bells, the
Connect room for 4th and 5th graders, a kitchen for cooking class or science experiments, numerous closets for storage, and a large group gathering space. While the square footage dedicated to the children’s ministry is wonderful, it is in need of updating, designed to be more child-friendly. For example, the bathrooms on that floor are designed for adults, not children.

It was shared that renovation of the 2nd floor will take place this summer with a $15,000 budget. But there are no plans drawn up currently. To fully design the kind of program space that All Saints’ aspires to have for children, a few things need to happen:

1. Rather than have a curriculum determine the use and design of the space, All Saints’ needs to name what it wants their children to know, experience, and feel in their time in the children’s ministry first. Figure that out and then choose the curricula to deliver those results. This ties back to creating an overall Christian Formation Plan in partnership with the youth ministry.
2. A Visioning Summit for children’s ministry needs to be conducted. Who are we and what do we want to do in the children’s ministry? Create a vision for children at All Saints’ and then configure space to meet that.
3. Map out a long-term plan to overhaul the children’s space.
4. Raise more funds for the children’s space renovations. A budget of $15,000 might cover the cost for new carpet on the 2nd floor and that’s it.
5. Map out a short-term plan to brighten up the current space in the meantime. Consider hiring a professional organizer to make the current space work more efficiently while new plans for more permanent changes are being worked out.

Other Observations
- There is a huge gap in the number of children’s ministry volunteers, and there is no intentional recruitment process in place.
- More non-parents could be engaged in the children’s ministry.
- Because of the physical separation in the buildings, children need to be more fully integrated into the life of whole church.
Assets

Strengths to protect in the current youth ministry

A Different Kind of Place

“We’re hippies compared to other churches. We’re more diverse. And I like that.” All Saints’ knows who they are and - just as importantly - who they are not. The people of this parish embrace their unique identity in Christ, unapologetically. Their inclusivity and enthusiastic welcome for anyone who walks through their doors is the essence of what sets them apart in a city and world quick to dismiss so many. While comparison traps can stop or stall forward progress, All Saints’ has continued to stand on the truths they believe and maintained their staying power in the middle of a religiously saturated, southern city. And families and students have noticed.

Tradition Integration

The threads of liturgy, prayer, music, and Episcopal tradition are proudly woven throughout all life stages at All Saints’ and bind the body firmly together. When children and youth gather for times of learning on a Sunday morning, the lessons and structure parallel the larger church family’s—and they are appreciated. When most business entrepreneurs are racing through the city for their weekday lunch, All Saints’ hosts noontime prayer services in the Chancel. During times of worship, the next generation is incorporated as the church of today, not just tomorrow, through the servant leadership roles they hold. As one parishioner said, “I feel like I’m a part of something bigger than myself.” Students are learning what it means to honor God through acolyting, ushering, reading Holy Scripture, singing anthems of praise, and celebrating their faith in many of the same ways generations of parishioners have done before.

Youth Choir

Through the ups and downs of the larger youth ministry, the one constant for the past two decades has been the youth choir. This body within the larger body is a place for community, Christian formation, and continuity of leadership for students. Choir at All Saints’ is more than just a setting in which youth learn choral music. Being a part of the choir is being a part of milestone events, memory-making trips, meaningful gifts, and many of the facets most teenagers experience when they are a part of a traditional “youth group." Director Karol Kimmel is a trusted adult in the lives of many youth and their parents and has led this ministry with a level of intentionality and passion that should be replicated. One student characterized it like this: “You’re more compelled to be here and more connected to be here when you’re a part of choir.”

Rites of Passage

The other consistent piece of the All Saints’ youth ministry puzzle are the three rites of passage a student can experience in their adolescent years. Rite 13, Confirmation, and Pilgrimage draw youth - who are both on the periphery and actively engaged - into community in ways weekly or monthly gatherings might not. These events often energize an entire grade level of students while providing an opportunity for ministry leaders to connect with parents and students - and help students connect with one another. The possibilities these milestone moments provide for community building, faith formation, and life application of beliefs are many and should remain.

Space

If you were to take a tour of each room in each building of All Saints’ in search of the youth space, it would be abundantly clear when you arrived. “The attic” is versatile,
homey, open, up-to-date, and perfectly different for teens. “A welcoming, safe place to make new friends and learn about faith and about the church,” is how one parishioner described part of a successful youth ministry. And the strategic investment of resources to transform the attic into such a space is just that. Students have access to a kitchen of snacks, couches and a lounge area to just hang, a half-court gym and game space in which to have some friendly competition, and rooms in which they can just sit and be. While youth group is more about the people surrounding you than the place, the place still matters - and All Saints’ took notice.

**Increased Intentionality**
Students, parents, and volunteers alike, have recognized and voiced great appreciation for the increased intentionality being given to the youth ministry in recent months. Which means - they’re recognizing more than just intentionality - they’re recognizing care, attention, and focus. FOR them. One student said it like this, “They’re really trying. You can tell they’re trying to be inclusive and have more opportunities for things.” A parent commended the efforts by saying, “The youth ministry at All Saints’ has already come a long way and will benefit from the strategic planning currently underway.” Increased mindfulness by leadership is one more jolt to moving momentum in a positive direction and building trust amongst all stakeholders.

**Stellar Staff**
Another positive jolt to momentum? Teamwork. And, if “teamwork makes the dreamwork” then now is the time for All Saints’ to dream big. The current staff leaders who oversee formation from cradle to college are unabashedly passionate about the work God has called them to, energized by the growth potential they know is within their reach, and actively working together in strategic ways. Their collaboration with and support for one another seems to fall second only to their shared hope of building relationships with the next generation and helping children of all ages realize the great love God has for them.

- “Karol is phenomenal. She creates field trips and gets to know each kid personally.”
- “I emailed Joel: ‘My son has a game tomorrow. Can you come?’ Joel showed up! And it was great connecting.”
- “Zack and Joel are working together so well.”
- “Zack’s affirmation of the doubts and questions youth have – that’s so valuable.”

**Clarity of Need**
Although opinions differ across the board about what would “fix” things, there’s one thing upon which everyone agrees: the youth ministry needs attention. This unity in clarity is a good thing! All Saints’ is not in a state of “panic” about its youth ministry. To the contrary, there is a steady voice amongst all those who gave input that taking the time and giving the attention necessary to move this ministry to the next level is good for students, families, and the church, as a whole. In talking with close to 100 people, similar assets and challenges were mentioned in every group, showing, consistently, the parishioners recognize similar gaps that exist and share a want for those to be closed.
Challenges

Obstacles to moving the youth ministry strategically forward

Communication Conundrums
Listening groups shared there is an overall need for better communication in the youth ministry. One parent stated, “I don't know what to expect; seems like there's a place for the printed page again; I don't know what the communication is.” Another one shared, “I get an email but then I have to sort through it. It’s kind of dense, and I end up glossing over stuff.” There doesn't seem to be a consistent plan for communication that parents can rely on. Some get the information, some don’t. A comment from another parent was, “There isn't enough publicity about the activities so not many people attend.”

Communication is received best when it is timely, consistent, and correct. There is also a balancing act when communicating – not too much and not too little. In the age of being easily distracted, communication has to arrive in multiple forms to catch a person’s attention--email, bulletin, church website, social media, texts, etc. It not clear what form of communications are being reliably used. A parent summed it up well by saying, “Communication is a little rocky at times, not for lack of trying.”

Communication is not just about sharing where and when youth ministry happens. It is also about sharing the stories of the ministry with the whole congregation. The youth ministry would be even more visible to the whole church if the successes of the ministries and stories of personal transformation were being told. A listening group participant summed it up well, “We're not good at telling the story of what goes on here.”

Not Fully Formed
Youth ministry programming has been haphazard in the past few years. Sometimes there was Sunday school for teens, sometimes there was not. It wasn’t predictable. One parent said, “The entire structure seems very haphazard and relies too much on rotating volunteers. We need cohesive programming from K-12 and rites of passages for kids to look forward to.” Since the new associate rector for formation arrived, there is more consistency in what is being offered. But the pieces aren’t all tied together in a way that makes sense. A father shared, “I don’t know my map of what’s available to my son at certain ages and grades. That would be great to have.” A parent of a younger child said, “I have a 3rd grader and no idea of what is to come. I want one page - here’s what to expect for K-12. I don’t know about Rite 13, Confirmation, or pilgrimage. I would like to know all of that. Milestones - I want those and to know what they are. I’ve been here eight years and am pretty involved and don’t have a clue about the youth ministry.”

Without an overarching Christian formation plan for what churches want their youth to know, feel, and do with their Christian faith upon graduating from the ministry, they run the great risk of a hit or miss approach, rather than giving their youth all that God intends for them to have. Without a clearly expressed, well-known set of spiritual developmental milestones and an understanding of when the youth will reach those markers, the possibility strongly exists that they could miss the significance of key points within their Christian education.

Not Enough
There are several challenges when it comes to volunteers. First, there are not enough of them. More investment from church members will need to be made to meet the current participation levels. One parent asked, “How do we involve the greater community too?
Non-parent volunteers - it’s important for kids to connect with another individual.” There is a need to “go fishing” for more volunteers and to create a sustainable volunteer system.

Secondly, an intentional recruitment process is not being utilized. Recruitment seems random at best, and many times, non-existent. This perpetuates the staff dependent model of ministry. An adult said, “Parents want to volunteer in meaningful and structured ways. We just need more help and guidance and a better understanding of the bigger picture and goals here.”

Appropriate training was also a concern expressed in listening sessions. Volunteers receive the Safeguarding God’s Children training, but little else is done to prepare them. One volunteer said, “There’s no training for Sunday school right now.” A parent also shared, “I’ve gotten burned teaching Sunday school.” Church members are more likely to say “yes” when they know they’ll be equipped to do the job they’re being asked to do.

Disconnected Youth
All Saints’ draws church members from all over metropolitan Atlanta. Some folks even drive over an hour to come to All Saints’. A parent said, “We draw families from all over the city; the youth group is a good mixture,” while another shared, “The different schools - that can be a plus AND a negative.” It’s wonderful so many folks are committed to All Saints’ regardless of where they live. The challenge that comes with this is that the youth all go to different schools. It’s hard for the youth to connect at Sunday school or SNL because none of their friends are there. So they end up not going, or going and not really feeling connected to the group. There’s a lack of community among the youth. One youth shared, “It’s tough to make friends,” when another said, “I have best friends but none of them go to this church.” In order to build critical mass in the youth ministry, the youth need to feel connected to each other.

Under-staffed
Based on the norms named earlier in this report, the youth and children’s ministries are understaffed. Church members may not easily see that because the staff care so much for the children and youth, they are willing to give more (or sacrifice more) to provide a solid, fun, and nurturing experience for children and youth at All Saints’. A parent said, “Kathy's going to run with it whether we show up or not.”

While it is wonderful to be on the receiving end of this, it is not a sustainable model for ministry. Common results are staff burnout (and sometimes that can turn into bitterness), balls being dropped, and expectations not being met. One adult pointed out, “Karol will retire someday. We can't hang that program on one person.” Fortunately, there are not many signs of this at All Saints’ but if not addressed, unsustainability will be an inevitable outcome.

Cracks in the Foundation
A dichotomy exists in regards to some systems in the youth ministry. An example of this is the major event calendar for youth ministry. A parent shared, “It would be great to know at the start of the school year what's happening. Karol does that for the choirs and we can plan around it.” This would lead one to believe that a youth ministry calendar doesn’t exist. The gift is that it does! Some systems and processes exist but not many people know about them.

A two things that seem to be missing from the youth ministry are:
Data Collection – Attendance is not being taken regularly or being entered into a database. Therefore, attendance trends cannot be determined and there’s not a sense of who’s not showing up. There also isn’t a youth directory readily available to share with the staff, volunteers, or youth families.

Major Event Notebooks - Information about the major events in the youth ministry are missing. These notebooks (either digital or hard copy) contain all the information in order to implement an event in the youth ministry. They also include notes from the previous year’s events that outline ways to improve that event.

Lack of a Shared Vision
Currently there is no common shared vision in the youth ministry. Without a common vision, there is no direction for how the youth can move forward. It’s like going on a road trip and having no destination and no map to guide you on your way. You would be driving aimlessly and very likely never reach your intended destination. One parent asked, “Where does this program fit in the larger scheme of things?”

When a ministry lacks a clearly stated vision, anxiousness and aimlessness is often a predictable result. The youth ministry moves from event to event with no purpose or goal. In order to move the youth ministry forward, everyone needs to be on the same page with a shared vision and healthy habits of communication regarding that vision should be formed.

One-Eared Mickey Mouse
While the Pritchett Center is an asset, it is also a challenge. First of all, it physically separates the youth from the rest of the congregation. Church members don’t know where the youth go, but they know it’s “over there.” This lends itself to the one-eared Mickey Mouse model. The youth are part of the church but very separated from the congregation.

Parent Connection
Parents are also feeling this disconnection. They don’t know each other and desire deeper relationships with one another. They also yearn to be equipped so they can pour into their own children. One parent said, “There’s a whole list of things we don’t know anything about. I want to augment the tool set my kids have to navigate the world they are growing up in. I want to learn those things myself. We need something more structured for adults.” The adult Sunday school class on “The Spiritual Child” has begun to provide that sense of community among the parents attending. Parents are craving connection with other parents, often just to know they are not alone in their struggles in raising teenagers. “I’d love to know more parents of 6th graders so that I can connect with them and get together,” shared a mom. More can be done to build parent connections. A dad stated firmly, “Where the church has fallen down is helping to equip parents to talk to our children about issues they deal within a faith perspective that I agree with.”

The Cliff
In the universal church, there is great debate about Confirmation and what age it should take place. A trend that churches experience across the board is that Confirmation was becoming an exit ritual. Instead of becoming more engaged in the church after Confirmation, youth seemed to be walking right out the door.
Some time ago, All Saints’ confirmed their youth when they were in middle school. The church made a shift with the *Journey to Adulthood* curriculum that addressed the exit ritual. Confirmation was postponed to 10th grade, when youth are more mature and able to better understand the commitment one makes at Confirmation. The hope is that 10th graders would get confirmed and then go on a pilgrimage to explore their faith journeys even more deeply. So instead of youth exiting the church at 7th or 8th grade, they were connected for a few more years with the appeal of a trip to a holy place with their peers. What All Saints’ is experiencing now is what many parents called “the cliff.” After they are confirmed in the spring and they go on their pilgrimage in the summer, they drop off the cliff and rarely make it back. A parent said, “I am afraid that time without structure between completion of the pilgrimage and college is a time when youth who are becoming young adults can become less connected (and possibly unconnected) with the church.” Another adult said, “There’s a major drop in attendance after the pilgrimage. It’s the Confirmation cliff.”

**Terminal Uniqueness**

It was observed that many listening group participants suffer from a perception disorder called “terminal uniqueness,” focusing intensely on the “unique” challenging factors facing the youth ministry:

- Extra-curricular activities such as sports taking a priority over church
- Families with packed schedules, who are therefore unable to participate regularly
- Youth attending schools that demand high levels of performance, including multiple hours of homework each night.
- Multiple feeder schools, making it difficult for kids to feel connected
- Being a church that does not come from the same zip code, making it difficult to get people to come back to church beyond Sunday mornings
- Being a church full of dual income adults who don’t have time to volunteer

One parent said, “In my opinion, kids are over-scheduled for the most part. Carving out time for church programs beyond Sunday mornings is a challenge. We live in Decatur, and both parents work, and it is difficult to get to church for Wednesday evening choir and dinner, for instance.” A survey participant listed the following as challenges for the youth program: other activities, school as well as outside activities and the time they demand. Families who don’t put a priority on church attendance and involvement. Attention spans that are decreasing due to technology. Keeping the high-touch aspect of our ministry in a world of high-tech. The challenges for families commuting to church for non-Sunday events through Atlanta’s traffic.

The fact is that none of these challenges are even remotely unique to All Saints’. Since we know the majority of these factors are present in almost every successful children’s or youth ministry in our country, the church can make the decision to keep their thinking about these ministries off the dead-end streets of explaining away a less than most effective program by pointing to these factors.

**Where’s the Bridge?**

In all churches, there needs to be an intentional plan for how children are moved from the children’s ministry into the youth ministry. Regardless of which grade is determined to be the best place to make this transition, it is essential that kids and their families know how the progression takes place and are educated as to what new responsibilities and opportunities come with the move into youth. The step from being considered a
“child” to being a “youth” is significant in the life of a young person, and if not handled proactively, can also be the place where a young person (and their family) walks away from the church (and sometimes the faith). That bridge from children’s ministry to youth ministry at All Saints’ is missing.

**Consumer Culture**
A phenomenon that is often pervasive (and very common) in our culture these days is one of a consumer mentality. It’s an approach of “what can I get?” versus “what can I give?” This is not unusual to see in churches, especially in the children’s or youth ministry. Parents seek out a church that has a strong children’s or youth program while, at the same time, those “done with” parenting young children also feel “done with” serving them, too. Or what can this church do for me so my children are given a spiritual foundation? Signs of this at All Saints’ are a lack of volunteerism, dropping off children or youth for Sunday school and the parent going to run errands or get coffee, or heavy reliance on the staff to do everything (we’ve hired the youth minister to do that, why should I?). This is not a sustainable model for ministry and requires a shift in thinking for All Saints’.
Recommendations

1) Reframe the next 18 months as a time of building long-term infrastructure for the youth ministry. Understanding that significant and immediate momentum will be built throughout the process of renovating the youth ministry, target September 2020 as the date when the youth ministry renovation will be complete.

2) Establish a Prayer Team (or enlist a current church prayer team) to undergird this renovation process.

3) Present this report to the Vestry requesting that they endorse an 18-month strategic design process for the youth ministry.

4) Reshape the current Task Force into a Renovation Team for Children and Youth, made up of four to five people including the Associate Rector for Children and Youth Formation. These non-anxious, goal-oriented people will free up the staff to focus on exceptional day-to-day ministry, while the Renovation Team ensures that the outcomes of this assessment are achieved. This team would serve for 18 months.

5) Establish a permanent Children and Youth Formation Committee, made up of five to six non-anxious people including the Associate Rector for Children and Youth Formation, who will assist the Youth Minister, Director of Children’s Ministries, and the Director of Youth and Children’s Music in the week-to-week management of the children’s and youth ministries.

6) Engage the services of Ministry Architects for the following additional services:
   - Onsite visit that includes a Quick Start Summit
   - Onsite visit to facilitate a Christian Formation Summit for children and youth ministries
   - Onsite visit to facilitate a Visioning Summit for children and youth ministries

Pressure Point #1: Build the Team: Staff the youth ministry with enough volunteers and church staff to meet the current needs of the program.

- Establish a volunteer recruitment process:
  - Identify all youth ministry volunteer needs for the 2019-2020 school year.
  - Write results-based job descriptions for each volunteer role.
  - Identify a list of 100 people to add to a fishing pond.
  - Merge the list of potential volunteers and needs.
  - Begin recruitment for hands-on weekly volunteers, event coordinators, and behind-the-scenes volunteers for 2019-2020 program year.

- Develop a Sustainable Staffing Model: Keeping the Ministry Architects “architect,” general contractor,” and “laborer” analogy in mind, develop an appropriate long-term staffing model for the youth ministry that will provide the church with significant capacity to sustain a thriving ministry to its targeted number of youth.
  - Short-term: Hire a 10-15 hour administrative assistant to support the children’s and youth ministries including the children and youth choirs.
  - Long-term: In May 2020 increase the Youth Minister’s hours to full-time to meet the staffing norm of 1 full-time staff person for every 50 youth.
  - Long-term: Evaluate the children’s ministry staffing to determine the
staffing needed to meet the staffing norm of 1 full-time staff person for every 70 children.

**Pressure Point #2: Build the Youth Community:** Intentionally build community amongst the youth through relationships and infrastructure.

- Establish a calendar through August 2020 that includes weekly programs as well as the major events of the youth ministry.
- Distribute that calendar to youth and their parents by May 2019.
- Publicize major events 2-3 months in advance.
- Intentionally incorporate ice breakers, mixers, and community building activities in all aspects of weekly programming for the full school year so that youth can begin to build stronger connections.
- Distribute a youth directory including addresses and contact information.
- Create a weekly email to parents of youth that is easy to glance through to capture essential information and include hyperlinks to more detailed information.

**Pressure Point #3: Create a Cohesive Formation Plan:** Determine learning objectives of each age level (children and youth) and how these might be accomplished utilizing curriculum, milestones, and weekly and special programming.

- Evaluate the current curriculum to determine its effectiveness.
- Develop a plan for what age youth will enter the youth ministry. Consider a transition year for 6th graders, creating a tween ministry.
- Develop a long-range scope and sequence as well as a set of core competencies for the children’s and youth ministry programming.
- Develop a clear plan for milestones and special events to shape the faith formation through the ages and stages.
- Determine how the curriculum selected will be communicated to volunteers.
- Decide what level of training will be required prior to full implementation.

7) Build the long-term infrastructure required for long-term, sustainable children's and youth ministries, including the following tasks:

**Building Infrastructure and Stability**

- **Host a “Quick Start” Summit:** Invite the Renovation Team, Children and Youth Formation Committee, and children and youth staff to participate in a Quick Start Summit in which the renovation process is launched and the pressure points outlined in the Assessment Report are addressed. The Summit tackles the items that need to be done first and builds momentum for the youth ministry renovation process.
  - Identify any progress in implementing the recommendations of this report.
  - Orient the Renovation Team and the Children’s and Youth Formation Committee to their specific responsibilities. Assign Renovation Team members responsibility for implementing the recommendations of the report.
o Create a plan for concrete communication between the Renovation Team, the Children and Youth Formation Team, and staff to ensure that all parties feel they’re “in the know.”

o Determine a date for the Christian Formation Summit possibly late April or early May.

o Draft the following documents, finalizing them within no more than two weeks after the Quick Start Summit:
  - A finalized version of the calendar for all weekly programs and major special events through August 2020.
  - Results-based, written job descriptions for all volunteer positions in the youth ministry. The job descriptions cover all current positions and also include additional, non-threatening opportunities for adult involvement in both visible and behind-the-scenes opportunities.
  - A clear and complete list of volunteer needs in the youth ministry, including relational and behind-the-scenes, weekly events and special event leaders.
  - A broad “fishing pond” list of at least 100 possible volunteers to call about volunteer positions. The list includes people sure to say yes, and it includes people that will never say yes (but hope they will one day).
  - A youth ministry directory (digital or hard copy) to be distributed to youth and their families.
  - A design for weekly emails to parents that is concise, easy to read, and include hyperlinks to additional information.

  - **Visioning:** Invite parents and leaders to participate in a multi-session, on-campus process of visioning a new future for the youth ministry with Ministry Architects, resulting in the following documents which will direct the ministry:
    - A ministry mission statement.
    - A statement of values.
    - A set of three-year revolving goals and one-year benchmarks
    - An organizational structure for the ministry.

  - **Control Document Development:** Create major event notebooks to help event planners succeed and generate a preventative maintenance calendar that schedules behind-the-scenes activities for each month (like “September: nail down the date for next year’s high school mission trip”).

  - **Compliance Documents:** Ensure that copyright licensing for music and videos has been obtained, an application and screening process for every volunteer is in place, and all adults working with any youth affirm a child and youth protection policy.

  - **Attendance:** Track attendance for all youth activities.
o **Database**: Numbers matter because people matter. Create a database of all the young people who are connected to your congregation. This database will be an important tool as you communicate and as you determine who is active. We recommend using categories that help you target your communication to students with various levels of involvement in your ministry (for example: “active,” “inactive,” or “visitor”).

o **Marketing**: Establish clear internal marketing processes that allow parents, youth, leaders, and the broader church to be exposed to the successes and good news surrounding the youth ministry.

o **Communication**: Establish normative processes for effective and timely communication with parents, youth, and leaders utilizing as many forms of communication as possible including updating the youth page of the church’s website, Facebook, mass texting, mail, email, and other social media.

o **Youth Ministry Manual**: Develop a Youth Ministry Manual, including the most recent youth directory, a 12 to 18-Month calendar, results-based job descriptions for staff and volunteers, compliance documents, budgets, game plans, a preventative maintenance calendar, and notes for every major youth ministry event.

o **Fall Kick-Off/Parent Orientation**: Develop an intentional, family-based, incredibly fun Fall Kickoff event to launch the youth ministry in the fall of 2019. Use that event to cast the vision, share information, and build enthusiasm about the year ahead.

o **Enlist an Experienced, Professional Coach**: Invite Ministry Architects to play the “coach” role during this renovation period. Ministry Architects would offer experienced direction for the building of an infrastructure for the youth ministry and provide ongoing coaching for the youth ministry staff members as well as the Renovation Team.

### Developing and Nurturing Staff and Servants

o **Strategic Staffing**: Propose a clear, appropriate long-term staffing plan, including the professional and volunteer components, for the youth ministry that will provide the church with significant capacity to sustain a thriving ministry to its targeted number of youth.

o **Sustainable Pace**: Help each youth ministry staff member develop a “rhythmic week” including a Sabbath and “balcony” time (that is, time to look at the big picture and make strategic plans).

o **Leadership Development**: Complete results-based, written job descriptions for all volunteer positions in the youth ministry and create a structure for the ongoing training of all volunteers at least quarterly.

o **Volunteer Recruitment**: Build a fortified volunteer leadership team, some of who will do relational ministry with youth while others work behind the scenes. Create a clear and complete list of volunteer needs. Create a “fishing pond” list of at least 100 possible volunteers to call on for weekly volunteer positions.
Leadership Launch: Schedule and implement an inspiring leadership-training event for all volunteer youth workers at the beginning of each school year.

Student Leadership Development: Develop a written game plan for combining the church’s current student leadership opportunities into a system that gives increasing load-bearing responsibility for mentoring and ministry leadership to youth.

Clear Strategies and New Initiatives Developing

Parent Engagement: Create a written process for engaging the majority of parents in the ministry in some way during the 2019-2020 school year.

Parent Support: Sponsor and execute encouraging parent support events, fellowship opportunities, and create mechanisms for engaging the majority of parents in the youth ministry in some way.

Measurable Markers of Effectiveness: Determine reasonable participation goals for all youth ministry events and weekly programs through December 2020 and take responsibility for filling those events.

Integration: Develop a strategic plan for helping the youth become an integral part of the whole church, weaving the youth ministry into the fabric of the entire church.

Non-parent Recruitment: Create a game plan to target specific, non-parent demographics in the congregation when recruiting volunteers.

Retention Plans for the Youth Ministry: Create game plans for

- Continuing to engage youth who have gone through the Rite 13 Liturgy.
- Keeping youth involved in the youth programs after Confirmation and the pilgrimage.
- Intentionally reaching out to missing-in-action (MIA) youth and reconnecting them in the life of the church.

Building Bridges: Develop a game plan for building bridges between the children’s ministry and the youth ministry.
Proposed Timeline:

The following provides All Saints’ Episcopal Church with a timeline that can serve as a blueprint for the strategic launch of sustainable, long-term youth ministry.

Many churches choose to use the services of Ministry Architects to provide coaching and experienced troubleshooting through this infrastructure-building process. If the church would like Ministry Architects to provide more specialized consulting in certain areas, particularly for the 18-month transition, we are available to help.

March 2019
Focus: Starting Right and Work Begins
Outcomes:

- This report has been presented to the vestry for the strategic renovation of the youth ministry and the vestry has given full support of this plan.
- A Quick Start Summit has been scheduled for late March/April.
- The Renovation Team for children and youth has been recruited and the first meeting has been scheduled to take place during the Quick Start Summit.
- A prayer team has been recruited and charged with praying for the youth ministry. They have received a copy of the assessment report and timeline.
- Work has been completed on the summer calendar for 2019 as well as the 2019-2020 youth ministry calendar.
- All volunteers needs for the 2019-2020 youth ministry calendar have determined.
- A fishing pond of 100 potential volunteers in the youth ministry has been created.
- The church has partnered with Ministry Architects for three additional onsite visits.
- The Children and Youth Formation Committee has been formed and has scheduled their first meeting to take place during the Quick Start Summit.
- Mechanisms for on-going education and coaching for the youth ministry staff and key volunteers have been provided.

April 2019
Focus: Renovation Underway, Quick Start Summit, Volunteer Recruitment
Outcomes:

- A Christian Formation Summit has been scheduled for May and a “save the date” email/postcard has been sent to all families.
- A Quick Start Summit has taken place in which the renovation process was launched, and pressure points outlined in the assessment report have been addressed. The Summit tackled the items that needed to be done first to initiate the youth ministry renovation process.
● Results-based job descriptions have been written and distributed to the appropriate volunteers for the youth ministry.

● A part-time administrative assistant has been hired to support the children’s and youth ministries.

● The weekly email to parents has been reformatted.

● The 2019-2020 youth ministry calendar has been completed through August 2020 including a Fall Kick-off and been distributed to families with youth.

May 2019

Focus: Christian Formation Summit, Recruitment, Database

Outcomes:

● The volunteer needs list and the potential volunteers list has been merged. Recruitment has begun for hands-on weekly volunteers, event coordinators and behind-the-scenes volunteers for 2019-2020.

● Interested staff, volunteers, and parents have gathered for a Christian Formation Summit to discuss the learning objectives of each age level and how these might be accomplished utilizing available curriculum, milestones, and special programming. At the Summit, the team
  o Evaluated the upcoming curriculum to ensure its effectiveness
  o Developed a long-range scope and sequence as well as a set of core competencies for the youth ministry programming.
  o Developed a clear plan for milestones and special events to shape the faith formation through the ages and stages. Determined how the curriculum selected will be communicated to volunteers.
  o Decided what level of training will be required prior to full implementation.

● A game plan for intentionally including ice breakers, mixers, and community building activities in all weekly programming has been created and begun to be implemented.

● Work on the youth database has begun, collecting the most recent information for families and youth. All are categorized in a manner that will follow up on MIA families and youth.

June 2019

Focus: Pressure Points, Recruitment, Database, Fall Kick-off, Bridge Building, MIA Youth, Curriculum

Outcomes:

● All pressure points have been addressed.

● Volunteer recruitment has continued.

● A Fall Kick-off team has been recruited to begin planning for the start of the fall youth ministry programs.
A database of all youth and their families has been compiled and each person is “tagged” with a category.

MIA youth have been systematically contacted.

A game plan for building bridges between the children’s ministry and the youth ministry has been created.

Each youth staff member has created a rhythmic week including balcony time and has begun to live into their rhythmic week.

The effectiveness of this past year’s curriculum has been reviewed and decisions have been made for any necessary changes for the upcoming school year.

July 2019

Focus: Compliance, Communications, Major Event Notebooks

Outcomes:

- Communication norms have been determined and those best practices are being implemented.
- A volunteer application, an application process and a screening process for all weekly hands-on volunteers have been created and implemented.
- Background checks have been done for all weekly hands-on volunteers.
- All paperwork for hands-on, weekly volunteers has been updated and is compliant with the Safe Sanctuaries policy.
- Copyright licensing for music and videos has been obtained. Permission slips for each offsite event in addition to standard medical release forms for the entire year have been created.
- All programs have adhered to the Safe Sanctuaries policy as laid out by the church.
- Work has begun on major event notebooks – creating a template for the notebooks and collecting information on each youth event.

August 2019

Focus: Mid-Course Evaluation, Attendance Tracking, Leadership Launch

Outcomes:

- The Renovation Team has completed a 6-month mid-course evaluation of the renovation process and made any adjustments necessary to improve the work being done.
- The Renovation Team has met monthly and decided how often they will meet for the remainder of the 18 months.
- Continuing education opportunities have been explored and calendared for the youth ministry staff.
- A process for tracking and recording attendance in all youth ministry programs has been created and implemented.
- All volunteers have experienced a Leadership Launch, lasting 2-4 hours that clarified their roles, inspired them to grow in their own faith and equipped them to serve. The Safe Sanctuaries policy was reviewed and adopted by all volunteers.

**September 2019**

**Focus: Participation Goals, Fall Kick-off, Directory**

**Outcomes:**
- With the most recent information on youth and their families, a directory of all families and a directory of all volunteers have been created to be distributed at the Fall Kick-off.
- A Fall Kick-off has taken place that welcomed youth and parents into a program they can get excited about, introduced parents to a format and structure they can feel confident about and provided a forum for receiving information from families. All participants feel energized and enthusiastic about the coming year’s programs.
- Reasonable participation goals have been determined for all youth ministry events and weekly programs through August 2020 and steps to accomplish those targets have begun to be implemented.
- All volunteer needs for the 2019-2010 school year for youth ministry have been filled.

**October 2019**

**Focus: Marketing, Communication, Engaging Parents, Curriculum, Budget**

**Outcomes:**
- Clear, internal marketing processes have been established that allow all church members to be exposed to the successes and good news surrounding the youth ministry.
- Communication methods currently being used to promote the youth ministry and share the successes with the congregation have been evaluated and added to if necessary.
- A process for engaging the majority of parents in the ministry in some way during the 2019-2020 school year has been written and implemented.
- Curriculum has been distributed to all teachers/volunteers and they have been trained to implement the curriculum.
- A detailed 2020 budget for the youth ministry has been completed and submitted to the appropriate group.

**November 2019**

**Focus: Visioning Summit, Welcoming Families**

**Outcomes:**
● A game plan has been written and implemented for welcoming new families, youth, and guests to the church so that they feel warmly welcomed. The plan has included a timely follow up plan to ensure their return to the church.

● A Visioning Summit with all major stakeholders has occurred producing visioning documents for the youth ministry (mission statement, core values, goals and structure).

● One-year benchmarks have been assigned to each three-year, revolving goal developed in the visioning process.

December 2019
Focus: Manual, Calendar
Outcomes:

● The Youth Ministry Manuals (both hard copy and digital) have been completed, including:
  o Visioning documents
  o Directories
  o Volunteer directory
  o Volunteer training agendas and notes
  o Attendance records
  o Annual calendar
  o Results-based job descriptions
  o Game plans and new initiatives
  o Meeting agendas and minutes for the Renovation Team and Children and Youth Formation Committee.
  o Christian Formation Plan and record of curriculum resources used for the current year
  o Budget and other financial documents
  o Recruiting template, with a record of all the volunteer needs for the year
  o Compliance documents

● Work has begun on the summer calendar for 2020.

January 2020
Focus: Mid-Year Training, Calendar, Volunteers
Outcomes:

● A mid-year training event has taken place in which all volunteers received support and training in their specific roles. A “check-in” with each volunteer has taken place to evaluate how the volunteer has been doing in their role and addressed any concerns.

● Work has begun on the 2020-2021 youth ministry calendar.

● Volunteer job descriptions have been reviewed and updated if needed.

February 2020
Focus: Calendar, Volunteer Recruitment, Integration
Outcomes:

- The summer 2020 calendar for the youth ministry has been completed and distributed.
- Volunteer recruiting season has opened.
  - Volunteer job descriptions have been reviewed and updated as needed.
  - Names of potential volunteers have been added to the fishing pond.
  - All volunteer needs have been determined for the 2020-2021 school year.
  - The volunteer needs list and the potential volunteers list has been merged.
  - Current volunteers have been asked to evaluate and renew their commitment to the youth ministry.
- Recruitment has begun for hands-on weekly volunteers, event coordinators and behind-the-scenes volunteers for 2020-2021.
- The 2020-2021 youth ministry calendar has been completed.
- A written strategic plan for helping the youth become an integral part of the whole congregation, weaving the youth ministry into the fabric of the entire church, has been created.

March 2020
Focus: Non-parent Engagement, Compliance, Database, Volunteer Thank You

Outcomes:

- The collection of updated information from each youth and family has been completed and the database for youth ministry has been updated with that new information.
- A written game plan for inviting specific, non-parent demographics in the congregation when recruiting volunteers has been implemented.
- All paperwork for hands on, weekly volunteers has been updated and is compliant with the Safe Sanctuaries policy. Background checks have been completed on each volunteer.
- All youth programs have adhered to the Safe Sanctuaries policy.
- A volunteer thank you event has been scheduled.

April 2020
Focus: Reflection and Re-Assessment, Game Plans, Retention Game Plan

Outcomes:

- All game plans that have been launched in last 12 months have been evaluated and tweaked as necessary for impact and sustainability.
- A review of the renovation process has been completed.
- An online diagnostic has been completed to re-assess the youth ministry.
● Current pressure points have been named.

● A game plan has been written and implementation has begun to
  o Continue to engage youth who have participated in the Rite 13 Liturgy.
  o Keep youth involved in the youth programs after Confirmation and the
    pilgrimage.
  o Intentionally reach out to missing-in-action (MIA) youth and reconnecting
    them in the life of the church.

May 2020
Focus: Participation Goals, Benchmarks, Major Event Notebooks

Outcomes:
● Reasonable participation goals have been determined for all youth ministry
  events and weekly programs through August 2021 and steps to accomplish
  those targets have begun to be implemented.
● 50% of the one-year benchmarks have been accomplished.
● All major event notebooks have been updated by the event coordinators and
  given back to the youth staff to pass along to the next year’s coordinator.

June 2020
Focus: Strategic Staffing, Preventative Maintenance Calendar, Parent Support

Outcomes:
● A preventative maintenance calendar has been created for the youth ministry
  that will help regularly deal with on-going “behind the scenes” ministry
  maintenance.
● With the changes in the youth ministry, the volunteer and professional staffing
  to meet the size and scope of the youth ministry has been evaluated and a
  game plan to meet those needs has been created if necessary.
● A game plan for building community among parents has been created and
  included encouraging parent support events, fellowship opportunities, and
  engaging the majority of parents in the youth ministry in some way.

July 2020
Focus: Student Leadership, Volunteer Thank You

Outcomes:
● A game plan has been created to develop student leadership in the youth
  ministry. The youth have been given charge of creating a welcoming
  environment.
● A volunteer thank you event has occurred.
● Major event notebooks have been handed out to next year’s major event
  coordinators.

August 2020
Focus: Sustainability, Leadership Launch
Outcomes:

- A timeline for the next 12 months has been created that included game plans for the current pressure points and items from the online diagnostic.
- Game plans have been put in place to sustain the processes and procedures during the renovation.
- Ongoing coaching has been secured and a sustainability plan has been put in place.
- The staff and Renovation Team have celebrated what God has done with their 18-month investment.
- The Renovation Team has transitioned their role to providing support and accountability to the youth volunteers and focusing on strategic issues such as three-year goals and one-year benchmarks, curriculum selection, calendars, and volunteer recruitment.
- All volunteers have experienced a Leadership Launch, lasting 2-4 hours that clarified their roles, inspired them to grow in their own faith and equipped them to serve. The Safe Sanctuaries policy was reviewed and adopted by all volunteers.
**The Ministry Architects Team Serving All Saints Episcopal Church (Atlanta, GA)**

**SARA BAILEY – LEAD CONSULTANT**  
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Sara is a life-long Episcopalian having grown up in Memphis, Tennessee, the land of Elvis. She has been in professional youth ministry since 1993 serving Episcopal churches in Tennessee, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina. While no longer in full-time paid ministry, she serves the children and youth at her own congregation in Louisville, KY where she currently resides. She’s been part of the Ministry Architects team since 2006 as a Lead Consultant and the Search Manager. Sara’s husband Geoff works at the University of Louisville (go Cards!) and they have a teen daughter as well as two dogs.

**RENEE WILSON – STAFF CONSULTANT**  
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Through her 15+ years of mentoring and ministering with children, youth, and young adults, Renee knows the value of building healthy teams and loves creating approaches around the vision of seeing more and more people come to know Christ. Before devoting her days to full-time ministry, Renee earned her B.S. in Psychology from The Ohio State University and her Masters of Education and Educational Specialist Degree in School Psychology from the University of Cincinnati. She has served churches in rural, urban, and suburban settings, currently calling the east side of Columbus, Ohio home.

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Bryant began working in youth ministry in 1996 in the United Methodist Church. He has been worship speaker for summer camps, taught seminars for youth workers, and written curriculum for the Florida United Methodist Camping programs. Bryant graduated from Florida Southern College with a Bachelor of Science in Sociology. In his free time Bryant enjoys all things technology, exercise, good movies, and blogs at thepostlu.de. He and his wife, Tonya, live in Kernersville, NC.
TASK FORCE MEMBERS

• Juliet Allan, Chair

• Amy Gaynor

• Geoff Pope

• Comer Yates

• Maria Del Mar Ceballos

• Paul Frilingos

• Jessee Furr

• Scott Porter, Vestry Liaison

• Zack, Kathy, and Joel - Staff
DEFINING THE WORK

TASK #1

Perform comprehensive review of Children and Youth Formation.

(Preschool through High School Graduation)
Ministry Architects has partnered with nearly 1000 ministries from 25 different denominations. Starting out as a consulting group exclusively focused on youth ministry, Ministry Architects now works with children’s ministries, young adult ministries, church-wide initiatives, nonprofits, and schools. We have worked with churches as small as 25 and as large as 10,000.
**BENEFITS**

**MINISTRY ARCHITECTS WILL:**

- Provide a process and on-site support for conducting the Review, along with best practices and experiences with churches of many denominations across the U.S.

- Assist in developing a sustainable, best-fit plan according to our particular context with high and achievable expectations.

- Work with an awareness of the rapidly and profoundly changing cultural and societal context.

- Offer Coaching to Staff in first six months of implementation.
THE 1950s ARE NOT COMING BACK!
- No longer a cultural expectation of church attendance

- Unchurched, over-churched, anti-churched “Nones” & “Dones” (39% of Gen-Z are Nones)

- Shift in neighborhood demographics and lifestyles

- Lack of formation across generations

- Technology, Information, and Science
TIMELINE

DECEMBER 9
First Task Force Meeting

JANUARY
Three Day On-site Assessment with Ministry Architects

FEBRUARY - MARCH
Develop Plan and Report to Rector, Vestry, and Parish

MARCH - JULY
Implementation Begins

AUGUST
Launch of Fully “Renovated” Children’s and Youth Programs
THE “RENOVATION”

- **Literal Renovation** of Children’s Ministry Center

- **Improved and systematized communications plan** and database for children, youth, and choirs for young people

- **Robust, dynamic, and comprehensive programming** and curriculum plans across each grade level.

- **Attention to programs for parents/caretakers** and faith formation a among families and at home. Intentional continuing ed. for staff.

- **Beginning of cultural shift** from a church that has young people to a church **for, of, and by** young people… Empowering Children and Youth for real leadership and full embrace… Full Integration of youth and children with core ministries, worship, and parish life.

- **Increased volunteer engagement**
OUTCOMES AND GOALS

- More children and youth
- More deeply formed children, youth, and families
- Expanded and empowered volunteer leadership
- Diversified and innovative offerings
- Resource to the Diocese and wider church
- Increased visibility of children and youth programs at All Saints’, leading to a more youthful parish culture :)